

Media Event Suggestions

Introduction

Sponsoring special events will help attract the media and visitors to **THE EYE SITE: A Traveling Exhibit on Low Vision** at each shopping center. The following event suggestions are designed to attract the target audiences for low vision.

Public

Opening Ceremony/Ribbon Cutting

Plan an opening ceremony/ribbon cutting to announce the exhibit to the community, specifically the media, general public, and your special constituents. Invite Host Committee organizations and their constituents, local and state VIPs, senior citizen center members, and the media. This is also an opportunity to feature a person with low vision who has benefited from the services offered in your community. (See sample opening ceremony ideas on pages 47–49.)

Exhibit Tours and Talk with the Specialists

Give tours of the exhibit and invite specialists in low vision, eye care professionals, rehabilitation specialists, and mobility specialists to meet with visitors and answer their questions. Best time to schedule: Saturdays at noon with an appearance by ELVEE.

Demonstration Low Vision Devices

Invite specialists to give demonstrations on how to use adaptive devices.



Meet the Representatives

Invite representatives from local government agencies and private organizations to present their groups' missions and describe the services they can offer people who have low vision.

Visual Acuity Screenings

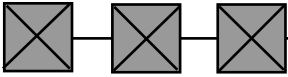
Invite eye care professionals to offer free visual acuity screenings at the exhibit. See Appendix C for guidelines.

Support Groups

Invite support groups to come to the exhibit to share stories with the public on how they learned to make the most of their remaining vision.

Mall Walkers Breakfast

Host a “mall walkers” breakfast with a specialist in low vision or eye care professional. Mall walkers are primarily senior citizens.



Volunteers

Host a 30-minute volunteer training session before the opening of the exhibit, using the volunteer tip sheet on pages 50–51. Give volunteers a tour of the exhibit and review state and local low vision resources and services. Also, provide logistical information about mall facilities.

Shopping Center Merchants

Host a continental breakfast and tour of the exhibit for shopping center merchants before the exhibit opens. Provide each merchant with an exhibit highlight sheet with dates of the exhibit and its location in the mall.

Vision Professionals

Professional Development

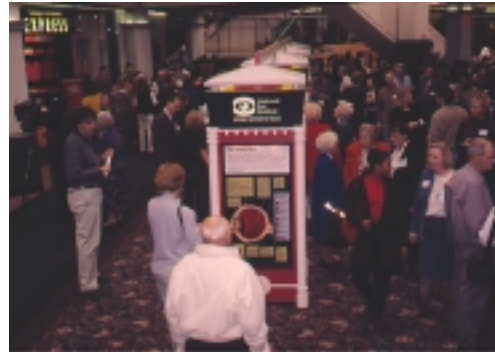
Offer continuing education courses for vision professionals one to two weeks before the exhibit opens.

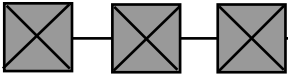
State Professional Meetings

Offer to provide a speaker on low vision for the monthly meeting of the state professional organizations. Schedule one month before the exhibit opens.

Preview Reception

Host a preview reception and tour of the exhibit before the opening ceremony.





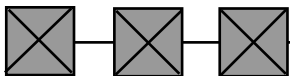
Opening Ceremony Program of Events

(suggested length: 15 minutes)

**Opening Ceremony for the
National Eye Institute's
THE EYE SITE:
A Traveling Exhibit on Low Vision for Shopping Centers**
at the
[INSERT SHOPPING CENTER NAME]

[INSERT DATE AND TIME]
[INSERT CITY, STATE]

Welcome	Host Committee Chair
Greetings	Shopping Center Management Representative from the City and/or State (Read a Proclamation from the City/State)
Introduction	Honorary Chair, or Local Celebrity, or Business Leader, or Governor, or Honored Guest(s)
Greetings	Patient with Low Vision
Remarks	NEI Representative Ribbon Cutting
Closing Remarks	Host Committee Chair/Spokesperson



Opening Ceremony Invitation List

Host Committee

- Committee members
- Member institutions/organizations/agencies
- Administration/Staff
- Donors
- Faculty
- Administration
- Chapter representatives
- Special friends

Organizations/Agencies

- NEI grantee institutions (NEI will provide a list)
- Organizations in the NEI's National Eye Health Education Program Partnership
- Vision-related volunteer organizations
- Civic and voluntary organizations
- State and local agencies (State Departments of Public Health and Rehabilitation)

Vision Professionals

- State societies of ophthalmology and optometry
- Vision rehabilitation professional organizations

Shopping Center

- Management
- Merchant
- Special friends

Sponsors

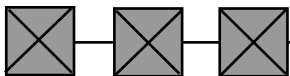
- Local sponsors

VIPs

- State and local health officials
- State representatives and senators
- City Council president and representatives
- Mayor
- Governor
- Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate, and designated staff members

Other Groups/Organizations/Target Audiences

- Senior citizen groups and vision-related support groups
- Advocacy groups (general medical, eye care, etc.)



Opening Ceremony Invitation Letter

Dear [_____],

On behalf of the [CITY/REGION] Host Committee for the National Eye Institute's (NEI) **THE EYE SITE: A Traveling Exhibit on Low Vision for Shopping Centers**, I invite you to [describe the role the official/guest will play at the events, e.g., read a proclamation, give greetings from the city, state, etc.] at the exhibit's opening ceremony at the [NAME OF SHOPPING CENTER] in [CITY] on [DATE] at [TIME]. You will be joined by [NAME OF OTHER DIGNITARIES], several other [COUNTY/CITY] leaders, local residents, and the media.

Your participation will focus attention on visual impairments that affect about 14 million Americans—one of every 20. Low vision is broadly defined as visual impairment not correctable by standard eyeglasses, contact lenses, medicine, or surgery. It interferes with a person's ability to perform everyday activities. People with low vision may have trouble recognizing the faces of family and friends, seeing the television, checking price tags, reading the mail, and walking around the neighborhood. These consequences often lead people with low vision to become confused, anxious, and depressed. People age 65 and older, as well as Hispanics and African Americans over age 45, are at higher risk for low vision.

The NEI, part of the Federal government's National Institutes of Health, has initiated a nationwide public education program to educate people about low vision and how vision rehabilitation can help people use their remaining vision to stay independent. This exhibit is part of the program.

The exhibit features five 4-sided kiosks containing an interactive multimedia touchscreen program, panels that highlight information about low vision and state and local resources, and a display of devices to help people with low vision. Also, free information brochures and flyers on local resources and services are available for visitors to take home. **THE EYE SITE** provides information that will help people take their first step toward meeting the challenges presented by low vision.

Your participation in this important event will demonstrate your commitment to helping people with low vision, their families, and friends. We would be honored and delighted for you to participate in the event.

We look forward to having you join us on [DATE]. We will contact your office to confirm your participation.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

[Title]